

The Saint Raphael Link

Some Periodic Ramblings of the Prior

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Email: revgeoffreyrobinson@ntlworld.com / Tele: 07817 82562

Dear Friends,

Earlier this week the telephone rang - I have to admit to feelings that phones are a necessary evil, demanding as they do our immediate attention. Fortunately, yesterday morning, I wasn't in the bathroom, eating a meal or relaxing watching some television; I was in fact, sat at my desk writing the opening article for the Parish Newsletter.

Picking up the telephone, I soon realised that the voice at the other end of the line belonged to a person that I worked with over thirty years ago. We soon began reminiscing about past times and the people whom we had both known and worked with.

How easy it is to let time pass us by without giving much thought to the intervening years. I really had quite forgotten her age and didn't realise that mobility had become a problem. She told me that walking was now only possible with the aid of a walking stick; or by car if her friend was willing to drive and assist and support her.

During our conversation which related to her lack of mobility she used the phrase that rang a cord with me. She said: *'but you just have to soldier on, don't you'*.

Not only did the phrase ring true about her particular situation; I believe that it is also true for most of us in our Christian life and discipleship.

There will be times for each one of us when we feel confined or constrained. It may be that we have got out of the way of saying our daily prayers. It may even be that our weekly observance of church worship has lost its lustre, or perhaps we even feel as though we have just simply lost interest.

Now, whether we accept these facts about ourselves or not; you and I are very lucky. We have been chosen by God to live our lives in the sure knowledge that Jesus is the true Paschal Lamb who was offered for us and has taken away the sins of the world. For by His death He has destroyed death, and by his rising again He has restored to us eternal life.

So I believe, that the least we can do in return for his many gifts to us, is to *'soldier on'* and answer his call to follow him in whatever direction that may take us. Faithfulness really is one of the most important parts of Christian discipleship; you never know where it may lead.

The road will not be easy, it will have its ups and downs; but what a reward awaits each one of His good and faithful servants. Amen.

+ Geoffrey

Cook's Corner:



BANANA TEA LOAF

Ingredients:

12oz self-raising flour / 6oz margarine / 4oz granulated sugar / 1 level tablespoon of Golden Syrup / 1 banana, peeled and chopped / half level teaspoon of ground cinnamon / ½ level teaspoon of mixed spice / 2 eggs, beaten / 2 tablespoons of cold black tea / ½oz of granulated sugar.

Method:

Set oven at 180C / Gas Mark 4 Lightly grease and line the base of a 1½lb loaf tin. Sift the flour into a bowl. Rub in the margarine and stir in the sugar, syrup, banana, cinnamon and mixed spice. Mix together the eggs and tea, then add them to the bowl. Stir well for one minute and spoon into prepared tin.

Bake in centre of the pre-heated oven for One hour fifteen minutes or until golden. Cool, and then sprinkle with sugar. Serve with butter.

For your Prayers:



Mary Dalton & Brian Keane

(Both Members of our Order who are now recovering from individual illnesses)

Anne & Gordon Gentry

(Members suffering with heart and chest related illnesses)

Margaret Waterhouse

(Recovering in a Nursing Home in Skipton after a series of strokes)

Helen Neaves-Wilde

(Settling into her new home and environment in Low Bentham, North Yorkshire – Helen is our Almoner)

Calendar of Saints:



St. Justin – Feast Day 1st June

St. Justin, apologist and martyr, was one of the most important Christian writers of the second century. He himself tells how his study of all the schools of philosophy led him to Christianity, and how he dedicated his life to the defence of the Christian faith as "the one certain and profitable philosophy."

St. Justin is particularly celebrated for the two Apologies which he was courageous enough to address in succession to the persecuting emperors Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius. One of them contains a description of the rites of baptism and the ceremonies of the Divine Liturgy, thus constituting the most valuable evidence that we possess on the Roman Ceremonies of his day.

Justin, the son of Priscus, was a Greek by race, and was born at Nablus in Palestine. He passed his youth in the study of letters. When he grew to manhood he was so taken with the love of philosophy and the desire of truth, that he became a student of philosophy and examined the teaching of all the philosophers. He found in them only deceitful wisdom and error.

He received the light of heaven from a venerable old man, who was a stranger to him, and embraced the philosophy of the true Christian faith. Henceforth he had the books of Holy Scripture in his hands by day and night, and his soul was filled with the divine fire enkindled by his meditations. Having thus acquired the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, he devoted his learning to the composition of many books explaining and propagating the Christian faith.

Among the most famous of the works of Justin are his two Apologies or Defences of the Christian faith. These he offered in the Senate

to the Emperor Antoninus Pius and his sons, together with Marcus Antoninus Verus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus, who were cruelly persecuting the followers of Christ. By these Apologies and his vigorous disputations in defence of the faith he obtained a public edict from the government to stay the slaughter of the Christians. But Justin himself did not escape. He had blamed the wicked life led by Crescens the Cynic, who caused him to be accused and arrested. He was brought before Rusticus, the Prefect of Rome, and questioned concerning the doctrine of the Christians. He was beheaded in Rome in 165

The Office of Grand Master



Howard Doe is the Grand Master of The Orders of St Raphael and St Mark. He has also been created Baron St Raphael (Ukraine-Ruthenia).

For many years he was the Secretary and Head of Central Admin at the Peabody Trust, London's largest charitable housing trust and he took early retirement in 2003. Housing has always been a key interest and he has been on the Boards of several housing associations.

In 2000, he was elected to Medway Council, a unitary authority for a population of some 250,000, and is Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services. This includes tourism, two castles, and events such as the two Rochester Dickens Festivals, Green Spaces, the arts, libraries, adult learning, sports and leisure, as well as grants for the disabled and voluntary organisations.

Howard is a Freeman of the City of London and of the Southwark Court Leet. He is also a Kentucky Colonel and a member of the Hungarian National Guard.

He and his wife Lesley have three grown-up sons and eight grandchildren, which is a recipe for very expensive Christmases but is more than compensated by their lively presence!! They also enjoy coming over to see Howard's model railway that has taken over the garage.

Howard and Lesley love travel and recently toured South Africa. They have also been to Altopascio and have seen on the archways of the old hospice the coat of arms of the Order of St James.

Howard is a member of the Rochester Pickwick Club and they appear in Victorian costume at the Dickens Festivals and dine out several times a year. Some may say he is typecast as the character of Angelo Cyrus Bantum, Master of the Revels at Bath, who appears briefly (thank goodness!) in Pickwick Papers.



Hey Diddle Diddle!

(Continued)

***Hey diddle diddle
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see such fun
And the dish ran away with the spoon.***

Moving on two hundred years we come to Queen Elizabeth I who enjoyed giving nicknames to her courtiers. She herself may have been the Cat with others including the Moon, Cow and Lapdog, the latter possibly being Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. The Spoon may have been the royal food taster while the Dish was her serving girl. When the latter two eloped it meant 'The dish ran away with the spoon' but the Queen was furious and, after hunting them down, locked them up in the Tower of London.

The third theory, surprisingly, is related to education. At various times of the year, especially in April, certain constellations appear close to the moon, the players being the Cat (Leo), the Cow (Taurus), the Little Dog (Canis Minor), the Dish (Crater, which is dish-shaped), the Spoon (Ursa Major, known as the Big Dipper in America and the Plough in Britain), and the Fiddle (Lyre). The Moon is obviously the Moon.

The rhyme taught children and farmers that planting took place in early spring when the entire constellation was close to the moon.

A fourth theory suggests a close and perhaps drunken liaison with several pubs on the Macclesfield to Buxton main road on the fringes of the Derbyshire Peak District. Built by wealthy local quarry owners in the 18th Century, the famous Cat and Fiddle Public House is still in operation today while the cow may have jumped over the now extinct Half Moon pub. The little dog might have been the Setter Dog which ceased trading a few years ago while the Dish and Spoon was open until quite recently

and is now a tea room. One wonders which came first though, the pubs or the nursery rhyme?

Other theories suggest the tune was a 16th Century fiddle dance, possibly called *High Diddle Diddle*; a link to worship in Ancient Egypt; a link to the Exodus from Egypt of the Israelites; that the lyrics originated in Ancient Greece; that it represented anti-clerical feeling when Catholic Priests demanded harder work from their congregations; that it was linked to other female figures in history including Catherine of Aragon and Catherine the Great of Russia; or finally to a game called trap-ball which later became known as knurr and spell, where a small ball was sprung into the air and then hit with a wooden bat as far as possible. It was an extremely popular game in the north of England and at one time attracted large crowds.

Maybe there is some truth in all these theories but maybe not. You simply pay your money and take your choice!

Did You Know



1. The average male will spend 2965 hours shaving during his lifetime.
2. Memories triggered by scent have a stronger emotional connection, and so appear more intense than other memory triggers.
3. It would take you more than 400 years to watch all the videos on U-Tube.
4. Bacteria, the tiniest free-living cells, are so small that a single drop of liquid contains as many as 50 million of them.
5. Tablecloths were originally used as towels on which dinner guests could wipe their hands and faces after eating.



**The Healing Teaching &
Chivalric Order of St Raphael**